DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 124 084 HE 007 948

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TITLE Degree of Solicitation Desired by U.S.C. Student Residents, Fall 1974. Research Notes No. 32-76.
PUB DATE 22 Apr 76
NOTE 10p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Housing; *Higher Education; Merchandising; Politics; Religious Cultural Groups; Residential Colleges; *Resident Students; Retailing; Salesmanship; *Sales Workers; *School Surveys; *Student Opinion
IDENTIFIERS Solicitation; *University of South Carolina

ABSTRACT

Student opinion concerning the degree of restriction desired in the University of South Carolina's (USC) solicitation policy was sought on several types of solicitation: political, religious, financial, and membership recruitment. They were also asked to differentiate between student and non-student solicitation. A residence hall solicitation survey was conducted and usable responses received from 421 of 675 students approached. The findings indicate that although support for solicitation varies with different groups, strong support for solicitation does not exist at USC. Students did not favor the complete removal or restrictions on any type of solicitation, especially solicitation by non-students. The data seemed to suggest potential support for some liberalization of policies concerning student solicitation while still retaining strong control over non-student solicitation. (LBH)

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ED124084

DEGREE OF SOLICITATION DESIRED BY U.S.C. STUDENT RESIDENTS, FALL 1974

RESEARCH NOTES NO. 32 - 76

April 22, 1976

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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HE007948

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RESIDENCE HALL SOLICITATION SURVEY:

INTRODUCTION:

Presently, the University maintains a restrictive solicitation policy in its residences halls and married student housing areas. Except for newspaper sales and official university business, solicitation is prohibited. Solicitation is defined as door-to-door contact for the purpose of soliciting funds or sales, recruiting members or support for an organization or cause, and compiling data for surveys, programs or other purposes. The policy's objective is to protect the privacy and security of students.

The purpose of this study was to elicit student opinion concerning the degree of restriction desired in USC's solicitation policy. Student reaction was sought to several types of solicitation, namely: political, religious, financial, and membership recruitment. In addition, students were asked to differentiate between student and non-student solicitation.

It was expected that single and married residents alike would favor a more restrictive policy. This hypothesis was based on the belief that students placed high value on their privacy and would prefer to preserve that privacy. It was also expected that solicitation by students would be more acceptable than non-student solicitation. Finally, it was expected that the type of visitation plan in effect in single student housing would be closely related to the degree of restriction favored. Specifically, the more open the visitation plan, the more lenient a solicitation plan the students would support.

METHODOLOGY

During the 1974 Fall Semester, a residence hall solicitation survey was developed by the Research Office, Division of Student Affairs. Every tenth student residing in University residence halls and married student housing areas was asked to complete the survey (approximatley 675 students). Residence hall staff distributed and collected the surveys within their respective housing areas. Usable responses were received from 421 students for a response rate of 67%.[1]

[1]Due to a lack of response by students living in married student housing, data on married students are not reported.

FINDINGS

The data in Table 1 show that a majority of students favored some form of restriction (complete or limited) on all types of solicitation studied. Students were somewhat less opposed to political and organizational solicitation than they were to financial and religious solicitation.

These results also show that students, as predicted, were more open to solicitation by students than by non-students. In fact, a majority of students favored complete restriction of solicitation by non-students in every case.

When comparing responses by sex, male students were somewhat more likely than females to favor complete restriction or non-restriction of solicitation. (see Table 2) Conversely, in every instance, females were more likely than males to favor limited restriction.

Table 3 shows that younger students were less restrictive, more open to solicitation than older students. This possibly reflects a more serious upperclass student; one who values privacy more. Older students were especially negative toward non-student and religious solicitation.

The relationships concerning visitation plans[2] proved to be far more complex than predicted. As predicted, there was a greater percentage of students in Bates West favoring open solicitation; however, there was also a larger percentage of students living in this coed apartment complex who favored complete restriction of solicitation. Students under open

[2]The four open house alternatives are as follows (hours subject to change):

Plan A. No open house hours: visitors allowed only in lounges and lobbies.

Plan B. Open house hours restricted to weekends on the following schedule: Friday and Saturday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 a.m.: Sunday, 12:00 noon to 11:30 p.m.

Plan C. Open house hours daily, on the following schedule; Sunday through Thursday, 12:00 noon to 11:30 p.m.: Friday and Saturday, 12:00 noon to 2:00 a.m.

Plan D. Apartment plan (Bates West): open house hours regulated by residents of each apartment.

house plan A, the most restrictive visitation plan, were generally the most supportive of solicitation.[3] In fact, students on Plan A strongly supported a loosening of restrictions on solicitation. In contrast, students on Plan C, the most liberal visitation plan other than Bates West, were the most restrictive in regard to solicitation.

One possible explanation for this unexpected finding was the joint process under which students and their parents selected a visitation plan. Under this system a student's choice must be in keeping with parental wishes if the student is under 21 years of age.[4] Accordingly, students who chose Plan A primarily because their parents wanted them to be under a more restrictive plan may have been expressing their desire for the increased freedom which they would have chosen for themselves under another visitation plan.

CONCLUSIONS:

Although support for solicitation varies with different groups, strong support for solicitation does not exist at USC. Students did not favor the complete removal of restrictions on any type of solicitation, especially solicitation by non-students. The data seemed to indicate potential support for some liberalization of policies concerning student solicitation while still retaining strong control over non-student solicitation.

[3] Note: The small sample size representing Plan A (n=11); however, only 88 students were living under Plan A during Fall 1974.

[4] Student age under this policy has since been reduced to 18.

TABLE 1: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SELECTING VARIOUS LEVELS OF RESTRICTION ON SOLICITATION AT USC, FALL 1974, BY TYPE OF SOLICITATION

TYPES OF SOLICITATION	COMPLETE RESTRICTION (No Access at any Time)	LIMITED RESTRICTION	NO RESTRICTION (Complete Access)
POLITICAL:			
Canvassing for elections by Students	36.1	46.8	17.1
Canvassing for elections by Non-Students	67.2	25.4	7.4
RELIGIOUS:			
Canvassing by Students	50.8	39.9	9.3
Canvassing by Non-Students	75.5	19.2	5.2
FINANCIAL:			
Student Vendors	41.6	42.8	15.7
Non-Student Vendors	71.7	22.8	5.5
MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT:			
Student Organization	33.5	45.4	21.1
Non-Student Organization	63.4	29.0	7.6

N=421

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SELECTING VARIOUS LEVELS OF RESTRICTION ON SOLICITATION AT USC, FALL 1974, BY TYPE AND SEX

TYPES OF SOLICITATION	COMPLETE RESTRICTION (No Access at any Time)		LIMITED RESTRICTION		NO RESTRICTION (Complete Access)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
POLITICAL:						
Canvassing for elections by Students	41.4	31.6	42.9	50.0	15.7	18.4
Canvassing for elections by Non-Students	70.7	64.0	21.5	28.9	7.9	7.0
RELIGIOUS:						
Canvassing by Students	52.9	49.1	35.6	43.9	11.5	7.0
Canvassing by Non-Students	77.0	74.6	16.8	21.5	6.3	3.9
FINANCIAL:						
Student Vendors	47.6	36.0	36.1	48.7	16.2	15.4
Non-Student Vendors	75.4	68.4	19.4	25.9	5.2	5.7
MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT:						
Student Organization	37.7	29.4	41.9	48.7	20.4	21.9
Non-Student Organization	66.5	60.5	25.1	32.5	8.4	7.0

Males N= 191
Females N= 228
Missing N= 2

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SELECTING VARIOUS LEVELS OF RESTRICTION ON SOLICITATION AT USC, FALL 1974, BY TYPE AND AGE

TYPES OF SOLICITATION	COMPLETE RESTRICTION (No Access at any Time) AGE 17 - 19	COMPLETE RESTRICTION (No Access at any Time) AGE 20 - 22	LIMITED RESTRICTION AGE 17 - 19	LIMITED RESTRICTION AGE 20 - 22	NO RESTRICTION (Complete Access) AGE 17 - 19	NO RESTRICTION (Complete Access) AGE 20 - 22
POLITICAL:						
Canvassing for elections by Students	32.2	39.9	50.5	43.2	17.3	16.9
Canvassing for elections by Non-Students	62.0	72.3	32.7	18.3	5.3	9.4
RELIGIOUS:						
Canvassing by Students	42.8	58.7	47.1	32.9	10.1	8.5
Canvassing by Non-Students	69.7	81.2	25.0	13.6	5.3	5.2
FINANCIAL:						
Student Vendors	39.9	43.2	40.4	45.1	19.7	11.7
Non-Student Vendors	69.2	74.2	25.0	20.7	5.8	5.2
MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT:						
Student Organization	29.3	37.6	46.6	44.1	24.0	18.3
Non-Student Organization	58.7	68.1	32.7	25.4	8.7	6.6

19 or younger: N=208
20 or older: N=213

TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE OF STUDENTS SELECTING VARIOUS LEVELS OF RESTRICTION ON SOLICITATION AT USC, FALL 1974, BY TYPE AND VISITATION PLAN

TYPES OF SOLICITATION	COMPLETE RESTRICTION (No Access at any Time) PLANS				LIMITED RESTRICTION PLANS				NO RESTRICTION (Complete Access) PLANS			
	A	B	C	*BHW	A	B	C	*BHW	A	B	C	*BHW
POLITICAL:												
Canvassing for elections by Students	27.3	30.7	39.7	40.6	54.5	50.3	44.4	43.8	18.2	19.0	15.9	15.6
Canvassing for elections by Non-Students	27.3	64.4	69.2	81.3	63.6	28.8	23.4	9.4	9.1	6.7	7.5	9.4
RELIGIOUS:												
Canvassing by Students	27.3	47.9	51.4	68.8	54.5	44.2	38.8	21.9	18.2	8.0	9.8	9.4
Canvassing by Non-Students	54.5	74.8	75.7	84.4	36.4	21.5	18.7	6.3	9.1	3.7	5.6	9.4
FINANCIAL:												
Student Vendors	36.4	38.7	45.3	31.3	36.4	45.4	40.2	50.0	27.3	16.0	14.5	18.8
Non-Student Vendors	54.5	70.6	73.8	68.8	45.5	24.5	22.0	12.5	0	4.9	4.2	18.8

Table 4: continued

MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT:												
Student Organization	9.1	31.3	35.5	37.5	54.5	46.6	43.5	50.0	36.4	22.1	21.0	12.5
Non-Student Organization	54.5	58.9	67.8	59.4	18.2	33.1	27.1	25.0	27.3	8.0	5.1	15.6

Plan A----------N= 11
Plan B----------N=163
Plan C----------N=214
Missing----------N= 1
*Bates House West--N= 32